FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome to your Spiritual Home!

We celebrate being a Just Peace making, Green for care of Creation, and WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) for mental health church, with an Open and Affirming covenant supporting the LGBTQAAI+ community.

Whether you choose to join us online or in-person, we believe we are called together by Jesus to be a transforming presence for God in the world. **We are a place to belong, a place to heal, and a place to love.** At First Congregational, we recognize God as a loving, creating, all-encompassing Spirit who is not limited by usual human boundaries, so we use inclusive, expansive, and non-gendered language when speaking of and to God.

We welcome all who worship with us today and include **all ages** in our hybrid worship service. We invite guests and members to fill out a Welcome/Prayer card found in the pew holder and put it in the offering plate. Children are invited to play quietly in the Prayground at the front of the church or use a “Quiet Bag” found in the Narthex.

***Disclaimer:** Our worship services are live-streamed. While the focus will be on the worship leaders, anything you say or do may be on film. If you have any questions or need to ensure you are not on camera, please speak with our minister.

Accessibility: Please see an usher if you’d like a listening device. We also have a variety of fidgets in the Prayground to support neurodiversity. Don’t hesitate to let an usher know if there’s anything else you need!

Pastoral Care: You may reach out to Pastor Sarah for pastoral care, including home visits, hospital visits, home communion, prayer, and conversation. You may reach her by text or phone at (386) 478-9012 or by email at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

In-Person Office Hours: Shannon (church admin) works in the church office on Tuesday and Friday mornings. You may contact her at shannon@fcindy.org.

November 15, 2026 **11:00 AM**

We celebrate today's worship leaders:

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund (she/her), Worship Leader and Preacher
Sean Baker (he/him), Music Director and Video Designer
Gracelynn Royer (she/her), Family Faith Ministry Leader
Ben James (he/him), Media Technician
Lorelei Guenther (she/her), Just Peace Intern
Scott Semester (he/him), Worship Song Leader
Lorelei Guenther, Liturgist
Gini Coomer, Pianist

*Please speak **bold** words aloud. Stand as you are able for asterisked (*) songs.*

WE GATHER

PRELUDE: *Prelude* J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

MISSION MOMENT Wendy Baldwin

CALL TO WORSHIP Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

One: God invites us to be a people of generosity.

All: God shows us that there is enough.

One: God invites us to remember our blessings.

All: God encourages us to build a legacy of love.

*SONG OF PRAISE: *Praise to the Living God*
New Century Hymnal #8

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 25:14-22* Lorelei Guenther

14 "Again, it's like a wealthy landowner who was going on a journey
and called in three workers, entrusting some funds to them. 15 The
first was given five thousand dollars, the second two thousand, and
the third one thousand, according to each one's ability. Then the

landowner went away. [16] Immediately the worker who received the five thousand went and invested it and made another five. [17] In the same way, the worker who received the two thousand doubled that figure. [18] But the worker who received the one thousand instead went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried the money. [19] "After a long absence, the traveler returned home and settled accounts with them. [20] The one who had received the five thousand came forward bringing the additional five, saying, 'You entrusted me with five thousand; here are five thousand more.' [21] "The landowner said, 'Well done! You are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!' [22] "The one who had received the two thousand then stepped forward with the additional two, saying, 'You entrusted me with two thousand; here are two thousand more.' *(Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible. Sheed & Ward. Kindle Edition.)*

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES Gracelynn Royer

PEACE MOMENT POEM Lorelei Guenther

Starlight, 1962 (by Victoria Chang)

Suppose the stars are just our grief reflected back to us, proof that grief sometimes forgets its source, that it can find dead things no matter how distant. Everyone arrives one day and asks, is this it? And the stars answer back with more stars. I wonder if Agnes started at the bottom or at the top, if she went left to right or right to left. There's no use in wondering if the canvas was on the floor or on a table. To ask questions is to be distracted by point of view. Point of view has a terrible memory. I've looked at photos scrolling up and over, zooming in and out, and realize it is not love I want, just the ability to zoom back out. A woman loses herself when she can no longer zoom out. Agnes knew that love exists because of the distance of starlight. That desire is the only thing with nerve endings. That

it drips. That it dries faster in the desert. She knew to paint it vertically but to hang it horizontally.

SHARING THE PEACE — Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

UNISON PRAYER — Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of generous love and the grace you pour upon us daily. Because of your abundant blessings in our lives, may we be generous in all that we do. May blessings overflow in every area of our lives so that the power of divine love transforms the world. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

WE ENCOUNTER

MESSAGE: *Extravagant Opportunity* — Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

*SONG OF REFLECTION: *Take My Gifts*

New Century Hymnal #562

WE RESPOND

JOYS AND CONCERNS

MEDITATION: *La Pastorale* — Burgmueller

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE — Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (from *UCC Book of Worship*)

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

OFFERING

INTERLUDE: *Fantasia in d minor* Mozart

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

WE GO FORTH AND PROCLAIM

*SONG OF SENDING: *Take My Life, God, Let It Be*
New Century Hymnal #448

BENEDICTION Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

POSTLUDE: *The Glory of God in Nature* Beethoven

THIS WEEK AT FCC

Sunday, November 15 – Giving Tree Collection

10:00 AM – Adult Education, Mayflower Room

11:00 AM – Worship, Sanctuary

12:15 PM – Buzz Pitch-In, Parlor

Tuesday, November 17

10:00 AM – Library Team

11:30 AM – Staff Meeting, Zoom

1:30 AM – Robin Run Gathering, RR Café

Wednesday, November 18

7:00 PM – Church Council, Zoom

Thursday, November 19

12:00 PM – FC/Garden Leadership, Library

Friday, November 20

1:30 PM – Senior Councilors, Zoom

Saturday, November 21

8:30 AM – Promise Recovery Group, Mayflower Room

Sunday, November 22 – Thanksgiving/Pie Sunday

10:00 AM – Adult Education, Mayflower Room

11:00 AM – Worship, Sanctuary

12:15 PM – Youth Group

Opportunities for Giving, Sharing, Fellowship, and Fun!

TODAY!!! What's the Buzz Pitch-In Lunch (in the Parlor): Please join us for a pitch-in lunch following worship. It's a great time of fellowship, updates, and discussion. We will be featuring discussion on the intriguing results of a Vitality Survey that several of us participated in earlier this year for the Vision Team work, as well as a review of the new group covenant between The Garden and FCC. Hope you can be there!

Giving Tree: The Outreach and Service Board will be setting up two Giving Trees this year. A Knitwear Tree in the Church Narthex for knitted or purchased items such as caps, gloves, and scarves. The Gift Card Tree will be set up in the Church Parlor for $25 gift cards from family stores such as Walmart, Target, Kohls or other similar stores.

Open Table Dinner: Wednesday, November 25, 6:00 PM
Come and enjoy a delicious dinner, delightful conversation, and soul-nourishing activities. The November Open Table will be a Thanksgiving Pitch-In. We're supplying the turkey, and you supply the sides and dessert. Sean Baker and Scott Semester will lead a sing-along to help us get into the holiday spirit! There is no cost to attend. Sign up sheet is in the narthex.

Holiday Office Hours & Newsletter Deadline (TOMORROW!): Due to the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, the church office will be closed on Friday, November 27. In order to get the December newsletter out before the holiday, all December newsletter articles are due by Monday, November 16.

Annual Campaign for 2027 - There Our Hearts Will Be! Our Annual Campaign to provide funding for our ministries in 2027 has begun, featuring a mission moment each Sunday from our 4 boards. Please prayerfully consider your financial plans for next year, and respond by turning in a pledge card by Sunday, Dec 6. You can put it in the offering plate during worship or mail it to the church. Cards & envelopes have been mailed and additional ones are available in the Narthex. Or you can email your intentions to our Financial Secretary, Cristy James, at cristysails@gmail.com. Thank you for your support of First Congregational!
- The Trustees

New Bible Study Group! A bunch of us are going to meet a couple times a month after Church for an informal bag lunch Bible study. Specific dates and

exact location(s) are still to be worked out based on your input and availability. If you are interested, please add your name and email address to the colorful signup sheet in the Narthex on the clipboard table/desk and I will email you with more details. - Judy Brown Fletcher JKBF@AOL.COM

Food Pantry for the Holidays: It's time to beef up our food pantry donations for the holidays. In addition to regular food choices, canned cranberry sauce, canned gravy and Stove Top Stuffings are particularly welcome for holiday meals. Reminder: please no glass jars or fresh food items. Thanks, Outreach & Service

Update on the New Lift: Work on the new lift is due to begin by 11/12. It will take at least 2 weeks, so we will need to work around not having a functioning lift during that time. We'll update you as we learn more - Wendy Baldwin

New Art Gallery: Thanks to the grant, the patio hallway and Parlor have been transformed to allow us to display works of art. For the month of November, we are featuring the beautiful quilts of Linda Lupton. Each month will feature a different artist. Enjoy!

Invitation to connect to Pastor Sarah for Pastoral Care, Presence, and Ministry: During the week, Pastor Sarah invites conversations and connection. From Tuesday through Friday (Saturday and Monday are sabbath days), Pastor Sarah works both at the church office for office hours and also works for the church remotely (home office, out in the community, and pastoral visits). Everyone is encouraged to reach out to Pastor Sarah to schedule a visit by emailing pastorsarah@fcindy.org or calling (386) 478-9012. In-church office hours for the week of November 15th includes the Robin Run Gathering on Tuesday, November 17th at 1:30PM. Pastor Sarah looks forward to connecting with you!

Sunday Mornings at 10:00 AM: Join our Adult Ed group for thoughtful study and discussion or go to choir practice to rehearse for that morning's singing, all skill levels welcome!

Interested in becoming a member of First Congregational? Talk to Pastor Sarah about making First Congregational your church home. Joining the church as a member is a way to grow closer to one another and to God in the spirit of love.

Ways to Connect & Serve: Interested in participating with a small group at First Congregational? Check out the Connect & Serve cards in the Narthex**,** and take one with you, if you like! Looking for an activity that isn't there? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

Cards to Our Church Family – Please sign the cards on our "card stand", for those celebrating birthdays or in need of prayers.

We Want to Hear from You: The Senior Council welcomes your questions and feedback! You can send it to askus@fcindy.org or fill out a form and put it in the box in the coat room. Thanks, Wendy Baldwin, Steve Coomer, Jimmy Hodges, and Pastor Sarah

Thank you for your financial gifts! Our current Covenant Outreach focus for September to December is related to our WISE Covenant and includes support for the following organizations: UCC Mental Health Network, Gender Nexus, and Indy Action Coalition. Gifts of single dollars and those designated to Covenant Outreach, are divided equally to these groups unless otherwise specified.

United Church of Christ MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK™

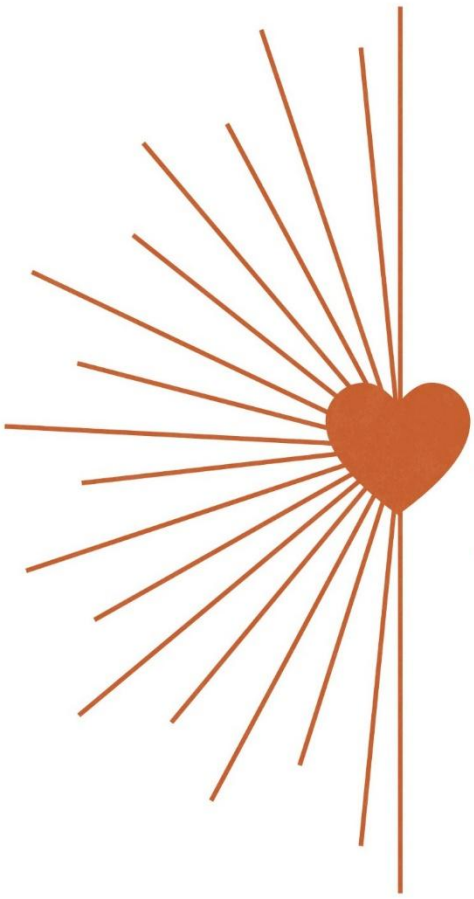
GenderNexus

INDY ACTION COALITION

Also, your pledge or undesignated gifts are greatly appreciated to support the mission and ministries funded by First Congregational's operating budget. You can place gifts in the offering plate, mail in a check to the church, or give online at www.fcindy.org.

Mental Health Support

The 988 Lifeline: 988 is now active across the United States. (call or text) **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI.ORG)**: information: 800-950-NAMI (6264). **The Trevor Project hotline** offers support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families struggling with mental health challenges: 866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) and **www.theTrevorProject.org**



THERE OUR HEARTS WILL BE

